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ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN SOUTH ASIA

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT: REGIONAL DISARMAMENT

Letter dated 25 February 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the statement of 20 February 1992 on Pakistan's nuclear programme made by Mr. Muhammad Siddique Khan Kanju, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (see annex).

I shall be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex is circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 56 and 61 (j) of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Jamsheed K. A. MARKER
Ambassador and
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Statement made on 20 February 1992 by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan on Pakistan's nuclear programme

Pakistan's nuclear programme is entirely peaceful in character and is not weapon-oriented. We remain firmly committed to the objective of nuclear non-proliferation and are willing to accept any non-discriminatory regional régime for keeping South Asia free of nuclear weapons.

Since 1974, when India exploded a nuclear device and demonstrated its nuclear weapon capability, Pakistan has made the following equitable proposals to ensure nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia:

(a) Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, a proposal which has been endorsed repeatedly by the United Nations General Assembly since 1974;

(b) In view of India's opposition to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, we proposed in 1978 that, as a first step, Pakistan and India should issue a joint declaration renouncing the acquisition or manufacture of nuclear weapons;

(c) In 1979, Pakistan proposed an agreement with India on a system of bilateral inspection of all nuclear facilities on a reciprocal basis;

(d) We also proposed in 1979 simultaneous acceptance of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards by Pakistan and India on all nuclear facilities;

(e) Pakistan expressed its readiness in 1979 to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) simultaneously with India;

(f) Later in 1987, Pakistan proposed the conclusion of a bilateral or regional nuclear test-ban treaty;

(g) In 1987, Pakistan also proposed the convening of a conference on nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of regional and other interested States.

The Prime Minister's proposal of 6 June 1991 for five-nation consultations was the latest move by Pakistan to ensure nuclear non-proliferation in the region. With the exception of India, this proposal has been accepted by all the other parties, that is, the United States of America, Russia and China.

Unfortunately, India has so far not accepted any of the proposals made by Pakistan for preventing nuclear proliferation in South Asia. We feel that India's position on the issue is against international trends, as well as peace, stability and progress of the region.

Pakistan, in the process of development of its nuclear programme, has acquired a certain technical capability in the nuclear field. However, a political decision has been taken at the highest level to use this capability for peaceful purposes only and not to produce nuclear weapons. At the same time, for obvious reasons, Pakistan cannot forgo its options unilaterally.

I would like to stress that Pakistan does not possess a nuclear explosive device and does not intend to make one. In consonance with its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation, Pakistan would also not transfer sensitive nuclear technology to third countries.

I would like to express the hope that India, in the interest of peace and progress in the South Asia region, would respond positively to Pakistan's proposals so that South Asia is saved from the spectre of nuclear weapons and the regional countries can devote themselves to the gigantic task of economic development and raising the standard of living of their peoples.